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Steps Already Trod: A History of First United
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THE STEPS ALREADY TROD:

A HISTORY OF

First United Methodist Church

SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA



By

JANE BOSTIAN PRICE



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Salisbury, North Carolina

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Finally, grateful appreciation is expressed to the individuals whose very lives have created the history of this church. Persons have only been named when their contributions were part of the available written record of the church. But the writer has realized, at every turn, that for every name which has entered the written record, contributions have been made by others which are recorded only in the mind of the Creator. The task of choosing names to include in this narrative would have been an unbearable burden were it not for the writer's strong conviction that those who are here unnamed shall still find their reward in heaven!

Jane Price
Rock Hill, SC
February 25, 1983

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FOREWORD

Members of the First United Methodist Church of Salisbury, North Carolina, have the good fortune to live in a community in which many of the characteristics of life in an earlier day have not been obliterated entirely by the industrial progress of the twentieth century. Situated on the edge of the West Square Historic District, the modern facilities which are enjoyed by the congregation in 1983 occupy the same plot of land which was obtained in 1831 for the erection of the congregation's first church building.

While the neighborhood surrounding the church continues to look much the same as it might have looked one hundred years ago, the witness of faith which the committed Methodists of Salisbury have tried to manifest to the community has been felt now for two hundred years.

The pages of this book represent an attempt to bring to light many of the incidents in the history of the congregation which have shaped its identity, strengthened its members in their commitment to do the will of God, and thrust it into the surrounding community and into the larger world, as a witness for God in the world.

WAITING FOR THE CIRCUIT RIDERS:
A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH OF SALISBURY IN THE 1700's

To appreciate the contributions which Methodism has made to the community of Salisbury, it is necessary to begin by wiping the slate clean of all the influences of European culture and civilization and the trappings of modern American society, and to begin with some observations of what life in Rowan County might have been like before there were any of the people called Methodists living there.

Archeological evidence of the Indian way of life, along with accounts from travel journals of a few Europeans who were in the area from the early 1700's until the middle of the century, suggests that the land which became known as Rowan County was noted for abundant wildlife, towering trees, and fertile soil. Salisbury's historian James Brawley, writing in the 1950's, noted that "this once rich and productive region comprised, in the minds of many early travelers, the most...productive part of North Carolina," making "Rowan most attractive to settlers."¹ Rowan County in 1983 still has some tracts of land which are untouched by modern development for as far as the eye can see. Removed from the clamor of the city, one can easily imagine how the landscape might have appeared to the earliest European settlers who came into the region.

The area also was crossed by the great Trading Path, an old Indian trail which was used by early settlers, and was considered, in Brawley's words, "the most important road through North Carolina in that day."² The road's north-south direction brought many settlers into the Yadkin River Valley, as the area became populated by persons coming upriver from South Carolina, and south from Pennsylvania through the Shenandoah Valley.³

In the early days the territory was part of Anson County, in the parcel of land deeded by the English king to the Earl of Granville. By 1753, the growing population found the trip to their nearest court house, located 10 miles west of Wadesboro, to be burdensome to them, and they requested a division of the land. On April 12 of that year, according to Brawley, the acting governor, Matthew Rowan, enacted a law "erecting...a County and Parish by the name of Rowan County, and Saint Luke's Parish."⁴

Signs of more progress were evident soon after, with the building of the court house and jail. By 1755, as Brawley notes, this newly populated area (still hardly to be called "urban" by present standards) had been given the name of Salisbury.⁵ During the next ten years, some sixteen roads were laid out in the area.⁶ By 1770, commissioners had been appointed to enforce regulations concerning the "speed of horses through the streets."⁷

From the beginning, as Brawley relates, the county was influenced by the religions of its settlers. The Germans brought their Lutheran and Reformed traditions, and established congregations as early as the 1750's. The Scotch brought their Presbyterian heritage, and established the Thyatira Church in 1753.⁸ The presence of the Church of England, as already noted, was taken for granted in the establishment of the county and parish.

These were some of the prevailing social, cultural, and spiritual characteristics of the new county. Methodism was not yet among the influences shaping the life of the people. In fact, the religious values which would eventually combine to form the worldwide movement which makes Methodism what it is in the twentieth century were only beginning to be expressed. Methodism, like the emerging nation of America, was still in its infancy. As the settlers of Rowan were yet to have their national identity tempered and shaped by revolution against England, so was the religious reform begun by the young Wesley brothers in England to gain a foothold in America only as it was shaped by the circumstances of war and the emergence of the new nation.

Into such a climate as this rode the young men whom John Wesley had sent to the New World to preach.

MRS. FISHBURN MEETS BEVERLY ALLEN:
THE FOUNDING OF A "SOCIETY OF TRULY AFFECTIONATE CHRISTIANS"

John Wesley himself was among those Englishmen who streamed to the New World in the early days of colonization. A clergyman in the Church of England, he came, as a missionary, to the colony of Georgia in 1736. Perhaps if the young clergyman had known what fertile ground this New World would provide for the growth of the reforms he wished to effect in the Church of England, he would have been less discouraged with the enterprise, in which, both by personal and vocational standards, he considered himself a miserable failure. Yet, his friendship with a group of Moravians during the Atlantic voyage proved to be a turning point in his spiritual and professional life, and set the stage for his Aldersgate experience, and its profound influence on the remainder of his life and ministry.

The name, "Methodist," was not one which the Wesleys chose for themselves, but one which was applied to them in derision by their colleagues at Oxford, where they had formed the "Holy Club." The Wesleys did not come to Georgia calling themselves Methodists and seeking to establish a society of followers. But George Whitefield, another member of the Holy Club, made numerous trips to America, and founded the first Society of Methodists in Delaware, in 1739.

The earliest entry of Methodists into North Carolina is not known. Dr. Elmer T. Clark, in a study of Methodism in the state, notes conflicting information supplied by the early historians of Methodism.¹ Jesse Lee, who was Salisbury's second pastor, and the author of the first published history of Methodism in America, regarded the New York Society, founded in 1766, as the first one. But Lee also noted that there were Methodists in America prior to that time, though they were not in organized Societies. Two itinerant Anglican preachers, Charles Woodmason and James Reed, refer in their journals to their unpleasant experience with Methodists they encountered in their travels in eastern North Carolina in the 1760's.² While there are no records to confirm the presence of any Methodists in Rowan County during the early years after its founding, apparently there were some Methodists in the state, farther to the east, at that time.

During these years the persons called Methodists were actually affiliated with the Church of England, since there was as yet no Methodist church. Although Wesley never actually meant to found a separate church, but only wished to make the Church of England more accessible to its people, he began to send preachers to America in 1769. According to Dr. Clark, Methodism was officially introduced into North Carolina in 1773, when the Petersburg Circuit in Virginia was extended south into eastern North Carolina. The first Society in the state was organized in 1774, by Robert Williams, who established preaching places along a route known as the Brunswick Circuit. In May, 1776, the Carolina Circuit was formed, and in 1777 the North Carolina circuit was designated.³

During the coming years, however, the enthusiastic young preachers faced critical circumstances which profoundly altered the nature of their work and of the course of Wesleyan history. Internally, there were instances of the young preachers' chafing at the tight rein which "Mr." Wesley, as they referred to him, tried to keep on them (even an ocean's distance away). Dr. Stuart Henry, in reading the journals of some of these young men, has found numerous entries which reflect their irritation with Wesley's paternalist, often patriarchal, way of dealing with them.⁴

With the polarization of relations between England and her colonies was to emerge the real crisis for these young preachers. The Methodists were generally regarded by other colonists as being loyal to the crown, and the preachers were often subjected to the indignities which flagrant Tories suffered. Dr. Henry points out the dilemma most of them felt, as, in their actual loyalty to the American cause, the preachers were subjected also to criticism from Mr. Wesley, who was openly Tory in sympathy.⁵ Over a period of nearly ten years, the Methodists who remained to cast their lot with America felt the pressure from within (to lessen the hold of Wesley upon them) and from without (to separate themselves from identification in the minds of other colonists with England).

The issues were complex ones, of church politics and national politics, but the eventual outcome was the founding, in 1784, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The occasion was the regular meeting of the preachers, and because it took place at Christmas, it has been known since then as the Christmas Conference. Succeeding generations have seen the tides of union, divisiveness, and reunion alter the shape of the body of the church; but it is that first entity, forged of the same irrepressible urge toward individual integrity and freedom which gave birth to the nation itself, which has survived and thrived for two hundred years.

The founding of a Society of Methodists in Salisbury took place one year before the founding of the denomination at the Christmas Conference. Methodism took root in Salisbury before the issues confronting those early preachers were resolved in the organization of a separate, American church. In fact, Methodists in Salisbury in the twentieth century, however accustomed they may be to seeing their fellow Methodists in positions of leadership and influence, might be surprised to learn of the influence of the Society in Salisbury in the early years of the new church. Persons who were instrumental in the establishment of the newly organized church routinely passed through Salisbury, and were related to the Society here.

From the outset of their coming to America, Wesley's preachers held conferences at least once yearly. Wesley's "methodical" approach to matters of spiritual and devotional life is clearly reflected in the careful attention to detail in the minutes which were recorded at these conferences, from the first one in 1773.⁶ Mention has already been made of the earliest known extension of Methodism into North Carolina, which began as a migration south from Virginia into the eastern part of the state. In 1780, the organized extension into the western counties was established, in the formation of the Yadkin Circuit. The Minutes show that Andrew Yeargan was assigned to travel that circuit, stopping to preach wherever and whenever a group of hearers could be gathered.⁷ Some of the sites where preaching took place in Davie County are known (Whitaker's Chapel and Beal's Meeting House),⁸ but none in Salisbury is known from that first year.

In the Minutes for 1783, when the Conference met at Ellis' Preaching House (in Virginia) in May, the Yadkin Circuit is reported to have had 348 members in Societies. The Salisbury Circuit also appears for the first time, with Beverly Allen, James Foster, and James Hinton assigned to it.⁹

In the summer of 1783, a class was formed in Salisbury, and the circumstances of its founding were recounted in later years by the woman who was instrumental in its formation.¹⁰ The young woman, Henrietta Cole (sometimes recorded as Coles) moved to Salisbury in 1765, at two years of age. Her father was William Temple Cole, an innkeeper, whose establishment was located at the intersection of Corbin (now called Main) and Innes Streets. (According to Dr. Jethro Rumble, the Presbyterian minister who wrote a history of Salisbury when he was pastor of First Presbyterian Church in the 1880's, Cole's will bequeathed to his son "the whole town of Salisbury," The elder Cole was killed in the Revolutionary War.)¹¹

From childhood Henrietta received religious instruction, and was well-read in the religious classics of the day. As she grew into a young woman, she took her early training to heart, and was earnest in seeking after spiritual satisfaction.

During the war, her family moved to Maryland, where she married Philip Fishburn. After the war was over, the Fishburns returned to Salisbury. Soon after this, by her account, "it was announced that there would be preaching in a school house by a new kind of people, called Methodists." The account continues:

She went early to the place of preaching, and was expecting to see a minister resembling the old church parsons; but judge of her surprise, when, instead of a stout, good-looking, finely dressed gentleman, with gown and surplice, in silk stockings and silver buckles, in walked a slender, delicate young man, dressed in home-spun cotton jeans.... The impressions made upon her mind and heart by this sermonhave never been effaced from her memory.¹²

The preacher was Beverly Allen, and at the time of his third visit, a class was formed. Other members of the class are not known by name, but it is likely that the society continued to meet, under the stabilizing influence of the Fishburns, until about 1790, when they moved to Pennsylvania, where, by her account, she was still living in 1854.

The story of the founding of the Salisbury Society does not have an altogether happy ending, however. Mr. Allen's preaching came to an abrupt end in 1792, when he became the first preacher to be expelled from the Conference. Over the next several years he committed several crimes, including the murder of a U. S. Marshal who tried to arrest him. He lived out his life practicing medicine in Kentucky, but was never again related to the church.¹³

By 1785, one year after the Christmas Conference, the Minutes report a membership of 18,000 in Societies all over the young nation, with 104 preachers serving them.¹⁴ The preachers were under the superintendency of Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, Wesley's deputies who had assumed leadership of the new church at the founding Conference.

Francis Asbury, as Dr. Clark describes him, was "by far the greatest figure in American Methodism and was second only to John Wesley in World Methodism."¹⁵ From 1771 until 1816, he "lived on the road and slept wherever night overtook him," riding on horseback for an estimated 228,000 miles in the New World.¹⁶ In his Journal are recorded many trips to North Carolina, including several to Salisbury. Of a trip in 1785, he writes: "Rode to Salisbury, where,

as it was court time, I had few hearers; and some of these made their escape when I began to insist on the necessity of holiness..."¹⁷

His two most important trips to Salisbury were for the Conferences of Preachers in February, 1786, and May, 1787. The Journal describe the first:

Next day I set off in the rain, and travelled with it; we swam Grant's creek, and reached Salisbury in the evening, wet and weary. I thought we should scarcely have preachers at the time appointed, but the bad weather did not stop their coming. We spent three days in Conference, and went through our business with satisfaction. Having sent our horses into the country, we could not get them when they were wanted; I therefore borrowed Brother Tunnell's horse, and went on to my appointments.¹⁸

According to Mrs. Fishburn, twenty-four preachers were in Salisbury for the Conference, and seven of them were guests in the Fishburn home during their stay.

The importance of Salisbury in the larger life of the fledgling church is evident in Asbury's choosing it as a meeting place for two successive years. Besides Asbury himself, and the somewhat infamous Beverly Allen, the Society was served by two other young men who later achieved considerable prominence in the life of the church and the nation. In 1783, the same year that Salisbury Circuit first appears in the Minutes of the Conferences, a young preacher's name is recorded among those received on trial as preachers. The young man was Jesse Lee, already mentioned as the first published historian of Methodism in America.¹⁹ Before his career ended at his death in 1816, he would also achieve prominence as Chaplain of the United States Congress from 1809 to 1815. In 1780, he chanced to be in Salisbury as a soldier in the Continental army. In 1784, he was appointed to the Salisbury Circuit, where, as he relates in his Journal, "there was a society of truly affectionate Christians."²⁰ Lee mentions preaching at Hern's ("to a large company of solemn hearers"), at Brother Carter's ("where I spoke, with many tears, to a weeping congregation"), at John Randall's, at C. Leadbetter's, and on Sunday, June 20, at Coles' (presumably the family of Mrs. Fishburn, or the tavern in the center of town), where "the congregation was so large, that the house would not hold them."²¹ Returning to Salisbury the following April on the rounds of his circuit, Lee mentions preaching at Hickman's, again at Hearn's (Hern's?), and Leadbetter's. On Wednesday, April 9, 1785, Lee mentions preaching a farewell sermon at the "new meeting house." (No mention is made of its location or ownership, in Lee's memoirs or in any other known accounts of the era.) In Lee's words:

After I had concluded and told them I was going to leave them, and begged they would pray for me, immediately they began to weep, and I could say no more: I set (sic) down and wept for several minutes. I then left the house, but before I could get far, they came around me weeping. I began to bid them farewell, and to speak a few words to them; but my own grief was so great, that I was soon forced to stop. I never saw, or felt, such a parting scene before. At times it seemed that I would as soon have died, as to be parted from this people: but upon due reflection I could say the will of the Lord be done. Who that has experienced, in some degree grief of parting with Christian friends, does not look forward with pleasure to that world of rest, where the redeemed of the Lord shall meet, to part and sorrow no more?²²

Lee's successor in 1785 was Hope Hull, who was a colorful character, popular among the preachers and his superiors. Dr. Rumple's history includes an account of Hull's dramatic attempt to disrupt the worldly gaiety of a ball in Salisbury, by falling down on the floor, shouting, and praying.²³ Apparently this very dramatic attempt to temper the world around him was successful, and should perhaps be considered the earliest documented witness to the community by Salisbury Methodists!

Hull eventually settled in Athens, Georgia, where he founded Washington Academy, which later became the University of Georgia. He served that institution for a time as its president.²⁴

THE LOG CHAPEL YEARS, 1831-1857:
GROWTH AND STABILITY IN THE DECADES BEFORE THE WAR

Mrs. Fishburn is the only one of the original Salisbury Society known to have left any reminiscences of it. There are no records of what became of the other individuals mentioned in Lee's Journal, and in fact, nothing is known of what became of the Society itself after Mrs. Fishburn left Salisbury in 1789. But there is information from other sources which suggests that Methodism continued to grow in Salisbury over the next few decades.

At the turn of the century, the Salisbury Circuit was included in the geographic area of Methodism known as the Virginia Conference. The circuit covered much of the Piedmont and mountain areas of North Carolina. Paul Henkel, a Lutheran pastor who served congregations in the Piedmont area, was greatly impressed with the advantageous use which he saw the Methodist leaders make of the newly founded experience of the camp meeting revival.¹ In the Iredell county area, a young Presbyterian-turned-Methodist preacher, Richard Hugg King, brought the camp meeting to prominence in 1802. Among his assistants were several Methodists, including Jesse Coe (sometimes recorded as Cole), who was appointed to the Salisbury Circuit at that time.² William Ormand, who was appointed to the circuit the following year, was a well-known leader in the revival movement. His effectiveness was noted by his colleague Daniel Asbury, a preacher on the Yadkin Circuit in earlier years, when he recalled that "after Brother Ormand's sermon, under prayer, the Lord displayed His power in an amazing manner."³

Revival fever swept the area, bringing new converts to many churches. Bishop Asbury encouraged the work of the revivalists, and was surely aware of the effects of this work as he made his way through Mecklenburg County, Concord, and Salisbury in 1808.⁴ The Methodists succeeded in making the camp meeting an integral part of evangelistic work, so that by 1810 they led other denominations in gaining new members.⁵

By 1831, the number of Methodists in the Salisbury area (which by then was designated in the Minutes as a part of the Yadkin District of the Virginia Conference) was listed at 868 whites and 69 colored.⁶ The Society in Salisbury, which was not yet listed as a separate Society, was able to purchase a plot of land in 1831, for the purpose of building a permanent house of worship. The lot, the third one in from the corner of what are now Fisher and Church Streets, was obtained from Isaac Burns, for the sum of \$100.00. Trustees for the property were John C. Palmer, William Chambers, Nathaniel B. Tayler, Ebenezer Dickson, Meshack Pinkston, Elkanah D. Austin, and Enoch Brock.⁷ By the following year, a log chapel had been built. The dedication of the new church was noted in the local newspaper, the Yadkin and Catawba Journal: "Quarterly meeting in this town on the second day of November next. On the third the new Methodist church here will be dedicated to Almighty God."⁸

The official roll of members at that time does not survive. During his pastorate in the 1870's, J. J. Renn made an earnest attempt to supply a reliable membership list from those early years. The information he was able to obtain was submitted to the Conference in its attempt to gather historical information related to Methodism in the state. His information also served as the basis for Dr. Rumple's account of the development of Methodism in Rowan County. (A paper submitted to that study, now in the Manuscript Collection at Duke University,

reveals the lack of any information in Dr. Renn's hands at that time of any of the activity by Methodists in Salisbury, already noted here, prior to 1831. In the absence of written records, he could only rely on the memories of the older members. Knowledge of Mrs. Fishburn, Beverly Allen, Jesse Lee, and others, must not have been a part of the oral history of members of the congregation in the late nineteenth century.) Dr. Rumble, quoting Renn, lists the membership of the society at the time of the building of the first church in 1831, as numbering twelve: Miss Adelaide Clary, John C. Palmer and his wife, James Glover and his wife, Mrs. Mary Hardy, Miss Margaret Shaver, Mrs. Slater, Mrs. Samuel Fraley, Mrs. Eunice Cowan, Alexander Biles, and Miss Sarah Bailey. The name of a thirteenth member could not be recalled by those persons supplying the information to Messrs. Renn and Rumble.⁹

During those years, Salisbury Methodism often held the attention of Brantley York, a local preacher evangelist-teacher who is best remembered as the moving spirit and first teacher of the school which today is known as Duke University. Licensed to preach, though never ordained, he was in many ways the equivalent, as an educator, to the circuit-riding preacher. He organized schools in many places, and wrote his own textbooks, some of which were published in Salisbury.¹⁰

While presiding over a school in Clemmons ville in 1839, he attended a camp meeting in Rowan County (South River), where he preached despite poor health. One of his listeners urged him to go on to Salisbury to preach. By York's own description, the Salisbury church was only an appointment on a circuit, "with but a small membership," but he preached "for ten days - and not without effect, for the Lord was certainly with us to bless the word."¹¹ York's work as an evangelist and educator took him virtually all over the state, and his travels included many more stops in Salisbury. His observations of the city during and after the Civil War give valuable insight into life in the city in those years.

During the earliest years of settlement of North Carolina, persons who identified themselves as Methodists were not usually held in high regard, particularly by the English, who considered them to be boorish and unrefined. But the popularity of the Methodist evangelical fervor in the early 1800's enabled Methodism to gain a strong footing among the common people, and the values of the new nation, in which the integrity of the common man was upheld and esteemed, soon gave to Methodism a respectable and accepted place among the religious institutions of the new nation. While the Methodists were at first at odds with their neighbors who had brought their Church of England heritage to the New World, they had a common evangelical bond with another group of Christians, the Moravians. The roots of this bond came from Wesley himself, and while the Methodist-Moravian friendship may not have been a crucial factor in the long-term evolution of either denomination, it was significant to the Methodists of Salisbury in the 1800's.

Wesley, during his years of inner turmoil in search of effective ways to revitalize the church life of the Anglicans he ministered to, was strongly influenced by the piety of Moravians he met. The great impression which their calm faith made on him during the storm-tossed Atlantic crossing drew him into close fellowship with the Moravian Society in London. Wesley visited Hernnhut, Saxony, the largest and most influential Moravian community, to experience for himself the Moravian communal life. Although he eventually expressed profound disagreement with many tenets of Moravian faith and practice, a bond of evangelical spirit continued to exist between Methodists and Moravians.¹²

This bond was quite significant in the life of a young Moravian man who came for a time to be a member of the Methodist Society in Salisbury. The young man was from the Moravian community of Salem. His name was Christian Lewis Rights (also spelled Reitz, Reutz, and Reuz at various places in the Moravian records). According to the congregational records for the Salem community for the year 1838, young Rights was confirmed into the church in that year.¹³ (According to some sources, the land on which the Moravians settled in North Carolina was obtained by their patron, Count Zinzendorf, from none other than the Methodist George Whitefield. Dr. Clark, in his History of Methodism in Western North Carolina, discounts this story. Other sources simply state that Count Zinzendorf obtained the land for the Moravian settlements from the English governor.¹⁴)

The granddaughter of Rights, Eugenia Stafford of Kernersville, N.C., wrote an account of her grandfather's life and work, based on her mother's recollections, which she sent to Dr. R. Herman Nicholson during his pastorate at First United Methodist Church, Salisbury.¹⁵ According to her account of his early years, Rights, having been nurtured in the faith of the Moravian community, came to Salisbury to work for the printer, J. J. Brunner. Since there was no Moravian congregation in Salisbury, he affiliated with the Methodist Society. (The Moravian records show the transfer of membership "of the single Christian Lewis Reuz to the Methodists."¹⁶) In Salisbury, Rights met and married a Methodist woman (Elizabeth Hughes), the wedding being performed by Brantley York. Soon after his marriage, Rights returned to Salem, where he and his wife were admitted to that congregation in 1844. He eventually became a teacher in the boys' school, then a home missionary to the mountains of North Carolina, and was ordained a minister, serving as pastor to the Friedland congregation. Financial difficulties caused him to leave the ministry for the printing business for a time. He later regretted this decision, and asked to be readmitted to the ministry. His request was subjected to the decision of the lot, and he was again made a minister and sent back to the Friedland congregation.¹⁷

According to his heirs, the years which Rights spent attending class meetings as a Methodist in Salisbury were a crucial "experience in Christ" which laid the foundation for his eventual decision to leave the printing business for a vocation in the ministry of the Moravian church.¹⁸ It seems fair to presume, then, that the "society of truly affectionate Christians" which Jesse Lee had known in Salisbury had passed through the enthusiastic years of the turn-of-the century revivals to become established as a congregation of Methodists, now able to worship in their own church home, and to receive new members into a stable and nurturing atmosphere.

THE "CONVULSIONS OF THIS COUNTRY":
METHODISTS IN SALISBURY FACE THE CIVIL WAR

It is only through the accounts of such men as Brantley York and Christian Lewis Rights that we know about the vitality of Methodism in Salisbury from the mid-1830's until the late 1850's, since no recollection of the society by its own members still exists. According to Conference Records, the Salisbury Circuit continued to be a part of the Virginia Conference until 1838, when a new geographical division led to the establishment of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1839, the meeting of the Annual Conference was again held in Salisbury. The minutes of the 1839 Conference record a membership for the "Salisbury Station" of 56 whites and 20 colored.¹

Unfortunately, there is no specific record of how the Methodists in Salisbury were involved in, or affected by, the disputes of the church which led to the formation of a separate Southern church in 1844. While the Methodist position against slavery was stated early (the Minutes for the Conference of 1785 conclude with this statement: "We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery; and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means."), some historians are critical of the expressed attitude of Southern Methodist leaders of the 1830's and 1840's, that slavery was a political issue, and not one which the church should try to bring any moral or religious judgment to.³ Whatever local sentiment or involvement in these issues was, the Salisbury congregation underwent a change of identity after 1844, when it came to be a church in the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This connectional relationship continued until 1890, when further geographical division resulted in the formation of the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. During the years of membership in the North Carolina Conference (1845-1889), the Conference met in Salisbury not only in 1838, but also in 1851, 1860, and 1877.

In 1847, a young black man named Henry Reeves assumed the duties of sexton at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Salisbury. He continued to serve the congregation for nearly sixty years, until his death in 1905. The nearly six decades of his tenure would see growth and expansion by the congregation, near devastation by war, and gradual recovery and rebuilding in the last years of the century. These years would also see an evolution in the identity of the people called Methodists, as their continued spiritual growth led them to new expressions of commitment to Christ.

While evangelism has always been central to the identity of Methodists, their concern in the years before and after 1800 was primarily for personal religious enthusiasm and upright moral conduct on the part of individuals. By 1900, the dramatic impact of God's redemptive grace in the lives of individuals had led the new generation of Methodists, who had lived through the upheaval of the Civil War, out the doors of the church and into the world around them. Their commitment to the redemption of individuals became the basis for the commitment to redeem the world through evangelism, missionary involvement, and social reform.

For the Conference years 1851-1852, J. P. Simpson was appointed to the Salisbury church. In his handwriting are recorded the names of the members of the church - both white and colored - of those years, in the oldest surviving

document which the church possesses. The leather-bound book contains records of church membership from the years 1852-1887, with marginal comments which relate incidents and circumstances characteristic of the congregation in those years. Addressing his successor as he prepared to move on to his next appointment, he wrote the following:

Dear Brother,

If you will take the old class books, you will see what I have had to go through in order to know who composed the membership of this charge when I came here in Dec'r last. I hope I have left you all necessary and desirable station information and that your labours among these dear Brothers and Sisters, and in the community at large, may be greatly blessed...⁴

Mr. Simpson's records, in addition to an alphabetical listing of members, include statistics reporting 161 whites and 105 colored members, with five classes under the leadership of eight class leaders: James Enniss, J. Myers, M. Griffin, J. J. Bell, M. C. Pendleton, William Rowsee, and H. B. Caspar. Enniss, Bell, Pendleton, Caspar, and J. T. Maxwell were the Stewards in that year.⁵

Mr. Simpson's successors were not always as diligent as he was in keeping an accurate roll, as various years have no entries, or are incomplete.

The Negro members of the congregation were among the 210,000 black Southern Methodists at the close of the 1850's. All denominations in the South had sizeable numbers of black members (often the property of the white members of the congregation), with the majority belonging to Baptist and Methodist churches.⁶ Several names on Mr. Simpson's roll of colored members have been crossed from the roll with the notation "Sold" or "Sold Away" beside the name. Others were expelled from the church, sometimes with a note of explanation (usually charges of immoral conduct), sometimes without.

Whatever the undocumented circumstances of the Salisbury congregation might have been, growth in numbers is evident, as Conference statistics show membership in the congregation to have grown from 37 whites and 49 colored in 1843, to 125 whites and 143 colored in 1860.⁷ The membership by then had outgrown the log chapel, so that in 1857 it was torn down and replaced by a larger brick building. The April 20, 1858, edition of the Watchman noted the completion of the project:

The new Methodist Church was occupied on Sunday last for the first time. It is a very neat building and must contribute vastly to the comfort of those who worship there. It is to be dedicated on Sunday next, Dr. Deems having been selected to officiate at the occasion.⁸ (Note: Dr. Deems was the presiding elder.)

A complete description of the building is no longer known to exist, but descriptions of later additions to it, which are present in all remaining photographs, suggest what the structure looked like at the time it was built. The facade was dominated by a circular stained glass window, with doors at the extreme right and left of the facade. The tower, which appears in all photographs remaining in the church's possession, was not added until the 1890's.



METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH – 1857

When the building was torn down in 1916, a copper box imbedded near the foundation in the rear wall of the church was opened. The box had not been adequately sealed against moisture, so its contents had mostly disintegrated. A news report of its opening, in the Salisbury Evening Post of August 7, 1917, tells that the remains included "portions of a small Bible and also small bits of the Christian Advocate of August 20, 1857."⁹ Fortunately, a penny made in 1857 had been placed in the box, and it alone remains today to symbolize that building. The penny was subsequently placed in the cornerstone of the next building, with a note of explanation from W. A. Lambeth, pastor of the church in 1917, who also included this information:

The aged ladies say that Mrs. Lucretia Brown, then a milliner here, put a pink silk bonnet inside the former stone! Some wire was found in this stone, and it may have belonged to the bonnet!¹⁰

Into this new building were welcomed the ministers of the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who came to Salisbury from December 5-11, 1860, for their annual meeting. At that time, the state was divided into seven districts: Fayetteville, Wilmington, New Bern, Washington, Raleigh, Greensboro, and Salisbury. The statistics for the Salisbury

district show a total white membership of 4,832, and a total colored membership of 835. The Salisbury District still covered most of the western part of the state, and included these charges: Salisbury, Rowan Circuit, East Rowan Circuit, Mocksville, Iredell, South Iredell, Alexander, Jonesville, Wilkes, Surry, Blue Ridge Mission, Sauratown, and Fisher's River Mission.¹¹

(These statistics do not represent the total population of Methodists in western North Carolina in 1860, but include only members of congregations in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. A significant number of Methodist congregations on the coast and in the mountains, and a few in the Piedmont, elected to remain in the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church, and were joined to form the Atlantic-Blue Ridge Conference of that church.)

The Minutes for the 1860 conference also show the appointment of Adolphus Mangum to the Salisbury church. With his coming to the church began one of the more difficult eras in the life of the congregation. And yet, the qualities of Christian charity and service which Mangum himself seems to have embodied must have enabled Methodism to make a great impact on the community during the war years.

Mangum was born in 1834, in Flat River, North Carolina. He graduated from Randolph-Macon College in 1854, and joined the North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1856. He served various appointments over the next 20 years, and later was named Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at the University of North Carolina. His appointments to Salisbury were in the years 1861, 1862, and 1865. In 1864, he married Laura Overman, the daughter of William and Mary Overman, who were members of the Salisbury church, with James Enniss as one of the witnesses. W. H. Bobbitt, who had been his presiding elder in Salisbury, officiated.¹² From the outbreak of the Civil War, Mangum showed great concern for the spiritual and physical effects of battle on the young men of the nation. In June, 1861, he contacted his fellow Christians in Salisbury about a meeting of the Bible Society of Rowan County, expressing his concern over the unavailability of the Scriptures to soldiers.¹³ In the later years of the war, when the prison at Salisbury was teeming with captive Union soldiers, Mangum persisted in a personal campaign to give pastoral care to the prisoners. In his regular visits inside the prison, he saw firsthand the physical and psychological anguish of the soldiers, and an account which he wrote of prison conditions remains to this day one of the most significant sources of information about the prison written from a non-military point of view.¹⁴

Mangum's concern for his Salisbury flock is easily seen in his attention to the keeping of the official roll. On November 29, 1862, he wrote this to his successor:

You will need to visit the members - all of them, a great deal. Particularly do I exhort you to watch over the young converts closely and tenderly. I earnestly pray the blessings of heaven upon your labor with this kind people.¹⁵

His successor, W. H. Wheeler, likewise kept careful watch over the whereabouts and the special needs of the members of the church. Mangum was sent back to Salisbury in 1864, where he again listed the membership, making pencilled

notations of soldiers from the congregation who were killed in action (including William Rainey and A. W. Wiseman) or imprisoned (L. W. Crawford), and those who had served the Confederacy but returned safely (Pinkney A. Kennerly. Alfred Owens. William R. Wright). He also updated the roll of Negro members, which had not been done since 1860.¹⁶

The carefully kept membership records of the congregation in Salisbury stand in sharp contrast to the indications of chaos which beset the connectional system of the North Carolina Conference by war's end. Published Minutes for the year 1864 are preceded by an editorial note: "The Minutes do not state where and when the Conference was held, or who presided; only the following questions and answers are given." Many of the questions related to Conference membership are left unanswered, and the appointments listing shows eleven persons appointed through the Raleigh District as chaplains to various regiments of the Confederate army. Minutes for the following year provide even less information, suggesting the disruption of communication in the state, and the momentary disregard for matters not urgent to the very survival of its citizens.¹⁷

While the war had touched the lives of Salisburyans in many ways. it was not to bring them to a state of near panic until it was almost over. Curfews, epidemics, and shortages of food and supplies had become routine during the war years. A disastrous fire in January, 1865, destroyed buildings in the vicinity of the Methodist Church, though no record exists to suggest that the church itself was ever threatened. There was continuing fear of a general escape of Union soldiers from the prison.

But in February, 1865, a situation was to develop which put the citizenry in danger of actually being caught in military crossfire. In advance of General Sherman's march northward from Atlanta, the prisoners of the Salisbury prison were sent to Wilmington, and the railroads through Salisbury were used to bring Confederate supplies to town to be stored in the stockade until they were needed by Lee's troops in Virginia. Union forces met this Confederate strategy by sending George Stoneman from Tennessee into Piedmont North Carolina. He destroyed supplies and supply lines in his sweep. Confederate defenders were unable to stop Stoneman as he came south from Salem through Mocksville, across the South River and Grant's Creek, across Shober's Bridge, and into town.¹⁸

Supplies were destroyed, but, in the end, the lives and property of the townspeople were spared. Several accounts, including one by Mrs. Hope Summerell Chamberlain. tell of efforts by the citizens of Salisbury to conceal their treasures from the invading forces, and of the initial fears, which later proved groundless, for personal safety.¹⁹

The only written record which survives to tell of how the members of the Methodist Church in Salisbury were affected by the turmoil of the war years is the book containing the membership roll. with Pastor Mangum's careful alphabetical entries and the pencilled comments, in his handwriting and in others' as well, which suggest stories of valor in war. of financial difficulties and abrupt changes of living circumstances, but also of a congregation which survived the war and was ready, at its end, to return to the patterns of ordinary life. While there is no written record to indicate the influence which Dr. Mangum had on the congregation, it is impossible not to think that the compassion and commitment which he showed to those in dire need of his ministering inspired the members of the church to join him in his cause.

THE YEARS OF RECOVERY, 1865-1915:
SALISBURY METHODISTS FORGE A NEW IDENTITY AS GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

As the nation began to recover from the devastation of the war, and as the South entered the era known as Reconstruction, the local congregation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, began its own era of recovery. In many ways, the years of recuperation from the war may also be seen as the time in which the church's contemporary identity, which has brought it through much of the twentieth century, was formed. Many of the issues of common life which shape and reshape the congregation of First United Methodist Church in the 1980's were equally vital to the Salisbury Methodist Episcopal Church in the 1880's. Prior to the Civil War years, the Minutes of the several conferences to which the church belonged stand as the only official record of the congregation's life, though personal reminiscences and other local accounts have helped to provide a more complete picture.

But from the year 1866, continuing until the present year, many records of the business conducted by the church's official body have been preserved. The minutes of many of these meetings tell of continuing concern, through the decades, with the vitality of the church's worship life, with financial stability, with the need to educate and nurture members in the faith, with the need to witness to the community in matters of moral concern, with the need to contribute to the missionary enterprise of the church all over the world, and with the upkeep and improvement of buildings.

Perhaps the most useful way to look at the record of the second hundred years of the congregation's life is to look at the ways in which those issues, and others, have shaped the activities and the self-understanding of the congregation.

The title page of the earliest book of Records of Church Minutes contains a note by William M. Robbins, Recording Steward and a Class Leader:

The system of Church Meetings was inaugurated in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the General Conference of 1866, and the first church meeting was held in Salisbury on the 26th day of June 1866.¹

Present at that meeting were the Rev. Oscar Brent, the pastor, and James Enniss, William Overman, J. P. Shields, A. W. Northern, H. A. Correll, N. H. Blackwood, William Blackwood, A. B. Wright, Henry Cauble, Abner Pace, and William M. Robbins. There were three items of business. The first was the establishment of the first Monday after the fourth Sunday as the regular meeting time for the group. Second, Messrs. Robbins, N. H. Blackwood, and Shields were named Class Leaders.

Finally came an attempt to recover the equilibrium of the membership, with the appointment of the Rev. Mr. Brent, Overman, and Correll as a committee

to revise the Register of names of the church members, which has become incorrect and encumbered with errors, by reason of the many changes that have taken place during the late convulsions of this country.

At the next meeting, a committee of three ladies was appointed and asked "to ascertain and report to the stewards of this church the names of such members as are in necessitous circumstances requiring relief from the church."

In the meeting of January, 1867, a Poor Fund was established, with R. R. Crawford as treasurer, to meet the critical needs of persons in the community. A committee of eight women was to be formed to see to the application of this fund to needy cases. In March the treasurer reported \$6.00 on hand in the fund. Over the next month \$4.60 was added to it, and \$8.00 of that total spent. By November, expenditures were \$17.50 out of a fund of \$21.55. In 1875, the Stewards designated the collection of Communion Sundays for this Poor Fund, and this practice continues to the present day.

With the restoration of some stability to the membership records of the congregation, the attention of the Stewards could be turned toward issues which would increase the spirituality of those persons. In January, 1867, class meetings (much like the prayer-study group of today) were discontinued, as "it appeared difficult to induce most of the members to attend such meetings." The office of Class Leader was, then, discontinued. A committee for the Sunday School was appointed, and charged "to take measures to bring additional scholars into the school." N. H. Blackwood was elected the first Superintendent of the Sunday School. but he died within the year, and J. P. Shields was elected to fill the post. By the Spring of 1868, the school reported having 12 teachers, 75 scholars, and a library of 150 volumes. Apparently the disbanding of the class meetings in 1867 had meant the end, for a time, of organized Christian Education for the adults in the congregation. For when Robert R. Crawford succeeded Mr. Shields some 14 years later, it was noted that "the Conference (i.e, Church Conference) advised the Superintendent to form adult classes in the Sunday School."

While little remains today to indicate what Sunday School was like in those days, a record book from the closing years of Mr. Crawford's superintendency has survived for over a hundred years. In addition to the statistical information required for the Sunday School record, incidents of human interest may be gleaned from the remarks made by the Recording Secretary.²

On June 15, 1884, the secretary noted that "the school was quite small again today, owing to sickness in town and the bad weather.." There must have been quite a bit of confusion in the neighborhood on September 14 of the same year, when, "owing to a mistake of the sexton in ringing the bell too soon many scholars did not get in time for the opening of the school (sic)." On December 21, with a weather report of "rain and sleet - in abundance," the complimentary notice appears that, "today being one of the most inclement days of the year the school (for that reason) should be praised for its large attendance."

In various ways, concern over the financial aspects of the church's operation has been central to the function of the body of Stewards of each generation. In 1867, each member of the church was assessed an amount to be paid toward the total of \$800.00 which was projected as the amount needed to meet costs of operation of the church for that year.³ The Stewards were charged with collecting the assessments from the members. This means of collection was continued for several years, but must not have been very successful, as there are several instances like that of the meeting in January, 1868, at which the Stewards elected to have the assessments read aloud to the assembled congregation at the close of the service on the first Sunday in February.

Two years later, the Stewards "unanimously resolved to adopt the subscription plan for raising money to defray the expenses of the station," which for that year were expected to be \$1500.81. But the most practical move, and one founding another practice which has continued to the present day, took place in 1874, when the Minutes record this action by the Stewards:

The plan adopted for raising the finances for the support of the station is as follows: that the weekly envelope system be adopted and the board recommends and agreed that it is the duty of every member of this church to pay as much as they are able to pay weekly for the support of the station, and something at least is expected of everyone, who is not an object of charity.

The Minutes further note that persons who failed to meet payments ought to expect a reprimand from the Board. The pastor's salary for that year was set at \$800.00, in a total budget of \$1235.00. By 1880, the salary had been raised to \$850.00. Over the next decade it stayed near \$900.00, with this figure apparently including an allowance for house rental, since the congregation had not yet acquired a parsonage.

The "very neat" building which had provided a place for worship and meeting for some twenty years, was in need of repairs and improvements in the 1870's. Although the exact nature of the repairs made is not specified, the Stewards expressed appreciation to the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches for the use of their buildings while repairs were being made in 1870. Earlier in that year, \$294.00 had been raised to pay for building repairs. In the summer of 1873, the Stewards agreed to bear half the cost (the total cost of \$50.00 to be shared by T. J. Meroney) of erecting a fence around the church. In 1876, the Stewards designated the Building Committee to "see about a light in front of the church."

Another repair, also unspecified in the Minutes, was made in 1877. The debt incurred in this improvement "proved a burden to the congregation for three years." In 1880, the final \$450.00 was raised to pay off the bank note. According to the Minutes, "the news of its liquidation was received with joy, and 'Old Hundred' was sung with the Spirit and understanding."

In 1882, the repair of a leaking roof was necessary. No more major improvements to the church building are mentioned in the Minutes until 1894, when "on motion of W. H. Overman, the Building Committee was instructed to have the gallery removed from the church."⁴ While galleries in nineteenth-century churches were often reserved for the seating of slaves, this one appears, at least in later years, to have served as the choir gallery. A letter from Mr. J. Francis Griffith, written in 1953, recalls the church in the years of his youth, when his father was director of the choir. According to Mr. Griffith, "this building had the choirloft originally in the back balcony, but it was later moved to the front, behind the pulpit."⁵ Again in 1897, the building was much improved by the enlargement of the tower, and the addition of Sunday School meeting space. This took place when T. F. Marr was pastor.⁶

The building was to stand for another decade and a half before the congregation elected to replace it with larger and more modern facilities. But the first decade of the new century saw the need for continuing repair and improvement. In 1907 the Stewards were informed, at various times, of repairs

needed to the vestibule floor and the cellar doors, of the "settling of the front church wall," of the need for additional seating space, of the need for an enlarged choir loft, and of extreme difficulty with the large front window. The committee appointed to correct the problem of the window reported that "the entire frame was rotten and likely to fall out at any time, which could cause the loss of the large art glass therein." Steps were taken for the immediate repair of the window. The choir loft was enlarged by an addition of two and one half feet of floor space, at a cost of \$15.00. Sidewalks were laid in front of the church and parsonage (which by that time was on the lot adjacent to the church).

All these improvements notwithstanding, Pastor McLarty is reported to have told the Board of Stewards, at the first meeting of 1908, that "he would like to see additions made to the Sunday School room or a new church built and that there was a crying need for this enlargement." Nearly ten more years would pass before the building was abandoned for a new one. But the stories of several significant events which took place in the old building remain to be told.

Very little is known of what worship services held in the church which stood from 1857-1916 were like. There were no printed bulletins in those days. The worship services prescribed for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did not vary from the prevailing forms of worship adopted by Wesley from the traditions of the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. Yet no first-hand accounts remain of how services were conducted in the Salisbury church, and the degree of formality in the prescribed orders of worship may have met with many different interpretations under the leadership of different pastors. But issues pertaining to the atmosphere of worship and to the state of the music in the church were frequently discussed by the Stewards during the decades after the Civil War.

As early as 1867, the Minutes reveal that "the church music was considered. The choir was pronounced useful, but it was resolved, that the whole congregation ought to sing hereafter and must endeavor to do so."⁸

In 1868, in response to criticism of the order of worship,

it was resolved that hereafter the weekly collections in the church shall be taken up immediately after the singing of the second hymn, and not, as heretofore, during the singing; such arrangement being deemed more consistent with propriety, and with order, decency, and reverence in the worship of Almighty God.

Also in 1867, the Stewards considered the "duty of male members leading in public prayer." (What would Susanna Wesley have said?) A Young Men's Prayer Meeting was organized to promote this enterprise. Three years later, the pastor asked for the support of members in establishing prayer meetings in private homes, to augment his work.

Deportment in church was a concern in the years after the war. In 1870, the Stewards decided to state their position publicly, in a resolution which they directed the Secretary to place in the newspaper:

Whereas certain persons are in the practice of disturbing public worship in the church of which we are Stewards and whereas it is our duty to protect all persons who assemble in said church for Devotions, therefore Resolved that as a Board of Stewards we will hereafter prosecute at the law all persons who herein offend.

No details of the offending behavior are given. A perusal of newspapers over a period of months following this resolution in March, 1870, does not reveal that it ever was actually published.

A difficulty which continues to plague preachers in the 1980's was expressed to the Board of Stewards in 1880, when "the Pastor, in a brief discourse, reproved the congregation for not occupying the front seats in the church during service."

Little is known of the character of the services in which the sacraments were made available to the people, beyond the practice of taking a special offering for the Poor Fund on Communion Sundays, which had been instituted in the 1870's. About 1890 a practice was begun which has continued as a custom to the present day. The family of James Plummer in that year assumed the responsibility for providing the church with its communion bread. Mr. Plummer was a Communion Steward, which in those days, in the Salisbury church, meant that he actually assisted the minister in serving the elements of Communion to the congregation.

Until 1903, regular homemade bread, cut into small squares, was served. In that year, a neighbor, who was Jewish, showed Mr. Plummer how to make unleavened bread, using nothing more than flour and water. Mr. Plummer himself made the bread, assisted by his daughter, Mrs. M. M. Mask, who took over the task after his death in 1934. Thirty years later, when Mrs. Mask moved to the Methodist Home in Charlotte where she continues to live, her daughter, Mrs. C. R. Hellard, took over the time and energy-consuming task. Recalling the earlier days when she first began to help her father in the task to which he devoted himself for so many years, Mrs. Mask told an interviewer from the Charlotte Observer that "it was back when the same wine cup was passed. Daddy helped at the communion table and we used plain bread."⁹

As long ago as 1870, church officials were concerned with the church's image in the community and the necessity of being on guard against being exploited by commercial enterprises using church facilities. In a report by James Enniss of a discussion which must have been quite heated, Pastor L. S. Burkhead is said to have expressed his frank disapproval in a situation which had only belatedly come to his attention. Apparently some of the church officials had entertained a proposition by the Tremaine Brothers, of New York City, to replace the church's organ (which was probably a reed organ, which got its air supply from a bellows pumped by the player with his feet). The Tremaines proposed to exchange the church's existing organ, plus a sum of \$300.00 to be paid by the church, for an organ valued by the seller at more than \$600.00. Further, the Tremaines proposed to come to the church to give a concert, with the

understanding that the church guarantee a minimum of \$300.00, but that the Tremaines be allowed to keep all proceeds from the concert. Burkhead did not approve the church's involvement in such an undertaking. because of uncertainty about the appropriateness of the concert. The Board supported his position in a resolution forbidding the cooperation of the church with presentation of any "Feast, Concert, Tableaux, Fair (etc.)" unless all details of the program are known ahead of time.¹⁰

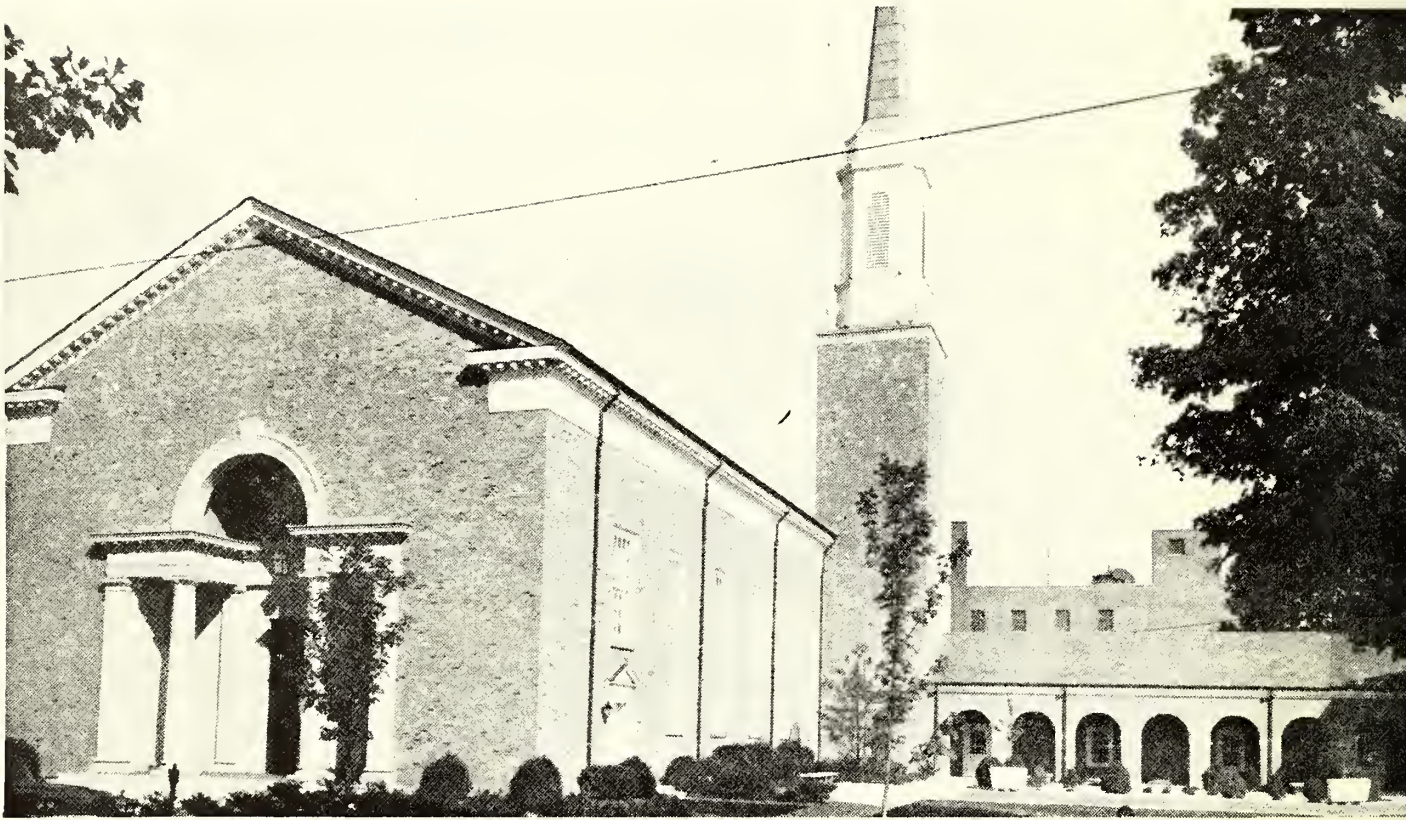
There is no further mention of replacement of the organ until 1880. At the September meeting of the Stewards, the pastor "reported conditions unfavorable - which was attributed partly to his absence - and partly to a want of zeal on the part of the congregation in regard to church music." He requested the church to "devise some means by which better music could be had." A committee was then appointed to investigate the possibility of obtaining a new organ.

Minutes of several meetings called for the express purpose of dealing with the organ purchase show the quick progress of these efforts. Miss Lila Marsh, Organist, was thanked "for her faithfulness as organist and her earnest endeavor to improve the music of the church." Under the guidance of a consultant, Professor Edwin Hopkins, of Brooklyn, New York, the church contracted for an organ to be built by the Steere and Turner Organ Builders of Springfield, Massachusetts, for \$900.00. The organ was to be installed by January 20, 1881, and was to occupy a space 14'8" high by 10'2" deep. Professor Hopkins was paid \$25.00 for his services as consultant. In 1882, Hopkins was paid an additional \$4.00 to oversee a repair to the organ.

Miss Marsh was succeeded by Miss Warner, when she left her position to be married to the Rev. F. J. Murdoch, who was rector of the Episcopal Church. Miss Mattie James was organist in the concluding years of the nineteenth century. and the church still possesses a volume of organ music which was used by Miss James. Other organists in succeeding decades were Miss Hattie Crawford and Mrs. Mabel Klepfer Buerbaum. Miss Louise Younts enjoyed a long tenure in the next generation.

Early in the present century, two other aspects of the church's worship life were examined by the Stewards. In 1907, the pastor, Rev. McLarty, "reported on the cost of the proposed leaflet giving theron (sic) the Sunday programs, etc., but after some discussion the matter was dropped."¹¹ The Stewards also in that year made plans to acquire 150 new hymnals (50 with notes). Unfortunately, no hymnals known to have been used by the congregation in these decades remain in the church's archives today.

Mention has already been made of Henry Reeves, the custodian of the church's facilities for nearly fifty years. Mr. Reeves continued to be a member of the church until his death in 1905, but at that time he was the only remaining black member of the congregation. The Conference statistics for the year 1843 show 37 white members and 49 colored.¹² In 1860, at the outbreak of the Civil War, there were 125 whites and 143 colored members. In 1863, the corresponding figures were 137 and 152, but by the next year the figures for both races had declined, at 122 and 106. In 1865, the white membership dropped to 75, but the Negro membership dropped abruptly to 6 persons. (The presumed reason for this is the abdication of the freed slaves, who had been required to belong to their masters' church.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Salisbury, North Carolina



This event is not documented except as it is seen in the membership statistics.) By the 1870's, the colored membership had dropped to 2, and from 1878 until 1905 it was 1, that one person being Mr. Reeves. At the time of his death, members of the Board of Stewards served as pall bearers.¹³

In addition to the changes in the appearance of the church building and the acquisition of the new organ, one other major practical accomplishment of the late nineteenth century remains to be mentioned. It is the building of a church-owned parsonage. Until 1889, money for house rent was included in the salary paid to the minister. In the unfilled pages in the back of a volume entitled Historical Church Register...1879-, upside down, are recorded the minutes of a called meeting of the Church Conference, on March 31, 1889. J. D. Gaskill reported on that day that a "lady member of the church had donated a lot for a parsonage." A marginal note identifies her as Mrs. E. A. Holmes, and her gift was enthusiastically received. At the meeting, plans were adopted for the construction of a house, and \$241.50 was pledged toward the cost of the work. (See picture on page 33)

By the turn of the century, the church had acquired the lot adjacent to it (the second lot from the corner of Fisher and Church Streets), and had built a new parsonage there.¹⁴ Mrs. Allie Ware Rendleman, still a member of the church in 1983, at age 90, recalls moving into the new parsonage as a young girl, when her father, W. R. Ware, was appointed to the Salisbury church. She describes the house as having seemed to be of palatial proportions to a young girl who feared that she would never grow tall enough to see herself in the mantel mirrors.¹⁵

The new brick church must have provided an impressive meeting place for the clergy who came to it for the meeting of the North Carolina Conference in 1860. The same building, expanded by the addition of the tower, and flanked by the new parsonage, must have been equally impressive as a meeting place for the Western North Carolina Conference in 1907. Stewards who met during the months prior to that latter Conference gave much attention to planning for the best use of available facilities during the meeting. Inquiries were made about the possibilities of borrowing chairs from local furniture dealers to provide additional seating space for delegates, about the advisability of accepting the offers of the Presbyterian and Baptist churches for the use of their buildings for some sessions, and about the need for additional toilet facilities. Committees were appointed to arrange to meet delegates as they arrived by train from all over the western end of the state, and to arrange with church members to house the delegates in their homes. At the regular October meeting, the body agreed to meet each Monday until Conference time to ensure that all details of arrangements were carried out smoothly. (The Minutes do not continue through the actual time of the Annual Conference, and there is no local account of how effective the planning was.)

Two other aspects of congregational life in the decades of the late nineteenth century remain to be looked at to complete the picture of Methodism in Salisbury in those years. The first has to do with the considerable influence in society which the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, exerted regarding personal morality. One social historian has said that the influence of the Methodists in urging persons to spurn the pleasures of the world and the flesh (such as gambling, dancing, and social mores which undermined the solidity of the family) "undoubtedly did much to impart a Puritanical flavor to Southern society during the period."¹⁶ The church gave particular emphasis to the evils of drink, and the same historian says that "it was in no small measure due to the aggressive leadership and moral

encouragement afforded by the Church that local prohibition was secured to some extent in all the Southern States by 1890," preparing the way for national prohibition.

Several instances of positions taken by church officials on matters of public behavior have already been mentioned. The routine expulsion of colored members for morally unacceptable behavior in the 1850's and 1860's has also been mentioned. In 1875, the Board of Stewards appointed a committee to investigate rumors about Ben Cauble and Maria Hartly. The committee's report, at a subsequent meeting, confirmed the truth of the rumors. Both persons were dropped from the church roll in the wake of the incident.¹⁷

The issue of temperance was given increasing attention as the new century arrived. When the Annual Conference met in Salisbury in 1907, the body was addressed by the Rev. R. L. Davis of the State Anti-Saloon League. The standing committees of the Board of Stewards of the Salisbury church in 1908 were these: Lookout Committee, Welcome Committee, Ushers and Collectors, Church Property Committee, Finance Committee, Sexton Committee, Church Membership Committee, Poor Fund Committee, and Temperance Committee.¹⁸

The other aspect of the life of the church in this era which must be considered is multi-faceted. It is the rise of organized missionary work, with the concurrent rise of organized women's work in the church. The first attempts at organizing women for mission work took place in Boston in the early 1800's. In the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, several women of unusual vision saw the great efforts which women were devoting to relief work in the war, and laid the groundwork for the channeling of these same efforts to the mission of the church at the conclusion of the war.¹⁹

It may be considered that the missionary work of women in the church at Salisbury was mandated by the church Stewards in 1866, with the establishment of the Poor Fund and the appointment of a committee of women to oversee the application of the fund to needy situations. The General Conference of 1878 gave formal recognition to the potential work which women might accomplish for the Kingdom of God in the world.²⁰ The Quarterly Conference Minutes for 1894, and the Annual Conference Minutes for the same year, show the establishment of a Women's Foreign Missionary Society in that year. The 29 women in the society raised \$51.50 in that first year. A Juvenile Missionary Society was established in the same year, with a membership of 90 young people. In the years after the war, money allotted for missions was often the last to be paid, although the Poor Fund had continued as a source for local relief work.

In the Quarterly Conference Record for 1895, Pastor T. F. Marr reported that "there is some anti-mission spirit among us but I think it is fast disappearing. There is some mission territory in East Salisbury that ought to be occupied at once." Until that time, of course, the "Salisbury Station" located on Church Street had been the only charge in the city. The Conference Minutes for 1895 list, in addition to the "Church Street" charge, the Chestnut Hill Mission (sometimes referred to as the Chestnut Street Mission), which was supplied in 1895 by a local preacher (for whom the church would ultimately be named), A. L. Coburn.

In 1896, according to Quarterly Conference records and to a historical sketch of the Park Avenue Methodist Church, a Sunday School was organized to meet on Sunday afternoons in the summertime in the Kesler Mill Community in East Salisbury. The school met in a one-room schoolhouse (known as the Kesler School) in the 600 block of East Kerr Street (now called Park Avenue). The Sunday School was a mission undertaking of the Church Street Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1900, a church was organized for the mill community, which was for a time called the Holmes Memorial Church. In 1914, a building was built at the corner of Park Avenue and Shaver Street, which continues to house the congregation of the Park Avenue United Methodist Church.²¹ Another mission begun in 1898 evolved into the Main Street United Methodist Church.²²

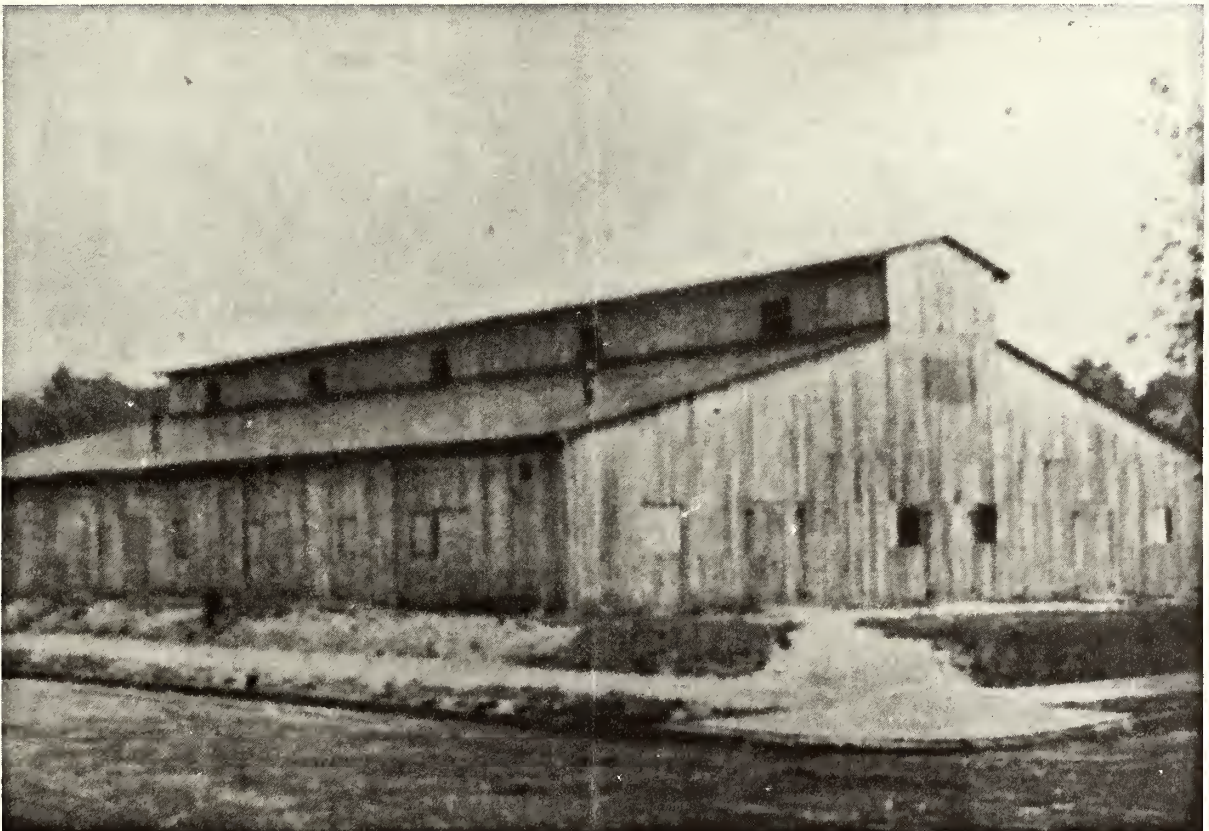
By 1900, the presence of Women's Missionary Societies in the Western North Carolina Conference was well established, and reports of the work of the Societies were regularly on the agenda of the Annual Conference. Prominent among the leaders of the Societies in their early years were many ministers' wives, including Mrs. T. F. Marr and Mrs. L. W. Crawford, both wives of pastors of the Salisbury church. These women were among several who addressed the Annual Conference on the subject of women's work around the turn of the century. An address by Mrs. Marr in 1902 was designated to be published by the North Carolina Christian Advocate. In addition to the Women's and Juvenile Foreign Mission Societies already mentioned, Women's Home Missionary Societies were organized in 1899, to provide parsonage assistance in the local church and with the local district mission organizations. In the years prior to 1912, the Salisbury church reported only a Foreign Missionary Society. By 1909, the local society reported a membership of 102 women who raised a total of \$247.00 for missions. In 1912, the 89 members of the same society raised \$305.00, while the Home Missionary Society's 48 members raised \$55.70. In the decades after the first World War, the women's organization served as the core of the missionary education program of the whole congregation, with individuals having designated responsibilities for work with children and youth.

While the prevailing values have changed slightly over the generations, the issues confronting Methodists in Salisbury in the latter half of the nineteenth century bear a remarkable similarity to those which the congregation has faced in the twentieth century. In facing these issues in the passing of one generation to another, the congregation has shaped and reshaped its identity as a community of God's people.

A CONGREGATION COME OF AGE:
THE METHODISTS OF CHURCH STREET IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The hope for enlarged and improved facilities for the congregation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Salisbury was expressed in the early years of the new century by Pastor McLarty. When Dr. T. F. Marr, who had served as pastor when improvements were made to the existing structure, was reappointed to Salisbury in 1916, plans began to be formulated for the building of a new church. The decision was made to build a new church on the same site as the old one stood on, so arrangements had to be made to accommodate the congregation during the removal of the old building and the construction of the new.

With the donation of land for temporary quarters made by the Presbyterians the decision was made to erect a temporary house of worship. In the style and spirit of the old fashioned barn-raising, the congregation gathered after Sunday morning worship, and in an afternoon, the men raised a mammoth wooden building known thereafter as the Tabernacle, which was to serve the congregation for about two years, and was to serve the community as a meeting house for a number of years to come. While the men worked on the building, the women worked to prepare a great dinner, so that, by the end of the day, a new house of worship stood in Salisbury. The Tabernacle stood on the site of the present-day Education Building of the First Presbyterian Church.¹



THE TABERNACLE, CORNER OF FISHER AND JACKSON STREETS

On November 6, 1916, the first brick was laid for the new church. Miss Carrie Murphy, a church member, had the privilege of placing that first brick.² The construction of the church took place during the first World War, but the war apparently did not interfere with the capability of the congregation to complete the project. On the afternoon of Sunday, August 5, 1917, the cornerstone was laid. A notice in the Salisbury Evening Post states that the service will be conducted in the Tabernacle in the event of bad weather, but otherwise will be "in the open at the church and the street for a block will be closed to all vehicles during the exercises."³

The bulletin for the occasion indicates that four hymns were sung by the congregation, accompanied by a band. Clergy from other churches in the city participated in the service, and addresses were given by the Reverend J. W. Moore, who had led the church during much of the time the new building was being planned, and by Dr. J. C. Rowe, Presiding Elder of the District. At the conclusion of the service, the cornerstone was put into place, with these words of dedication:

We lay this corner-stone of a house to be built and set apart, from all worldly uses, for divine worship, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Articles to be included in the cornerstone, as listed in the bulletin, were the Bible, a Hymnal, a Discipline, copies of the North Carolina Christian Advocate and the Nashville Christian Advocate, "A Brief History of this Church," by Mr. Leroy Smith, "A Description of the Rising Building," by Mr. J. C. Kesler, who was Chairman of the Board of Stewards, a Directory of Church Members, a photograph of Miss Grace McCubbins, a program of the ceremony, and a copy of the Post. Also included were the 1857 penny, and 1916 coins, with the note of explanation mentioned earlier about the box from the old church.

A story of the occasion in the Yadkin Valley Herald also notes that an evening service was held in the Tabernacle in honor of Miss Grace McCubbins, who was to leave that week for mission work in Korea. The Herald reports a number of speeches in honor of Miss McCubbins were made by persons in official positions in the congregation. Included were Mrs. Will Weant, for the Young Women's Missionary Society, Mrs. D. A. Beaver for the Women's Missionary Society, Alexander Smoot for the Light Bearers (Juvenile Missionary Society), A. L. Smoot, Lay Leader, and Messrs. Moore, Rowe, and Lambeth. Miss McCubbins also spoke, and her talk was described by the reporter as "a little gem breathing the spirit of service and love for the ones to whom she is going to minister."⁴

Within eight years of the beginning of construction, the new church was paid for. The original debt of about \$100,000.00 had been reduced by half by 1921, and was seventy-five per cent paid by 1923. According to an unsigned handwritten note, these funds had grown from an initial contribution of \$2.00 made to Pastor Moore by six-year-old Shelton Caldwell Dry, who gave his entire savings to the cause of building a new church.



FIRST METHODIST CHURCH – 1917

On September 14, 1924, the facilities, which had first been occupied in March, 1919, were dedicated at special morning and evening services. Bishop Collins Denny preached at the early service. The evening sermon was preached by Dr. Ware, who had been pastor in 1902. Pictured in the souvenir bulletin were John F. Kirk, the pastor in 1924, Dr. Marr, who was then Presiding Elder, J. C. Kesler, Dr. Ware, and the Rev. J. E. Abernethy, who had been pastor when the new church was first occupied.

While the war in Europe seems not to have affected the life of the congregation, the great outbreak of influenza which swept the world in 1918 touched the lives of Methodists and all other churchmen in Salisbury. Under quarantine, the doors of all churches were closed for six weeks during the epidemic. A notice in the November 15, 1918 Post tells of the Quarterly Conference to be held at the home of P. N. Peacock, 218 West Horah Street. A short service to be held at the Tabernacle on Sunday had to be planned to take place in the absence of Pastor Lambeth, who was still ill.

As the new building was being readied, a new organ was being constructed by the Austin Organ Company, of Hartford, Connecticut, to be placed in the new church. The new organ was the company's Opus 818, and it would serve the congregation for sixty years. Professor Scott Hunter, of the faculty of the Woman's College in Greensboro, was secured to present a program using the new organ. Francis Griffith, the Choir Director, was pleased to report to the Board of Stewards in 1922 the progress of the fifty members of the Junior Choir, whose "interest in voice culture, sight reading, and hymn singing is quite remarkable in view of the short time they have been under instruction." In those

years the choir included a quartet of paid singers, and the names of J. W. Rideoutte and Fred Young are regularly included in the report of the Treasurer of the Board of Stewards. The salary paid to the organist, which had stood at \$1.00 per week in the 1870's, had risen by 1920 to \$58.33 per month.⁵

In 1920, the Annual Conference again met in Salisbury. This time, plans had to include not only meeting those delegates who arrived by train, but also parking the cars of those delegates who came by automobile.

In 1924, with J. C. Kesler as Chairman, the Board of Stewards included the following committees: Music, Sunday School, Church Property, Lord's Supper, Relief, Membership, Pulpit Supply, Ushers and Collectors, Boys' Work, Girls' Work, Publicity, and Social Service. The year before, Mr. Leroy A. Smith had completed a year as Chairman of the Board, and assumed the responsibilities of Treasurer. While there is no question that his predecessor, Mr. P. N. Peacock, had been diligent in serving the church in that capacity, Mr. Smith brought to the position a unique combination of energy, commitment, and humor which enabled him to leave his imprint on the practical life of the congregation as no one has before or since him. Mr. Smith was a postal employee, whose faithfulness and punctuality were well known by all those whose lives were served by his devotion to his work. But he gave the church a similar amount of time and energy, working - by his own estimation - about 30 hours a week in his position as Treasurer. Scrap paper from Western Union served as memo sheets for him, and the pervasive ways in which he applied his imagination and energy to the organization of the church have left a legacy which the congregation still enjoys in the present day. He instituted a system of dividing the membership into neighborhoods according to the "ward" division used in the civic structure of Salisbury at that time. His plan originated the Neighborhood system of communication among church members which has continued into the present day.

Remnants of correspondence with the Duplex Envelope Company refer to a system of catch-up pay envelopes which he had devised for persons who were delinquent in pledge payments. A surviving envelope which bears the motto, "Pay your dues weekly, not weakly," surely bears the stamp of Mr. Smith's good humor.

His desire to be of genuine service to his Pastor is evident in a copy of a note sent to the Rev. W. A. Newell prior to his arrival in Salisbury as the next pastor. In the note, Smith introduces himself to Newell, credits himself with having been of help to Newell's predecessors, and then notes, with what must have been characteristic good humor, that if he didn't prove himself to be helpful also to Newell, then "there is something wrong with both of us."

His grace in difficult circumstances is evident in copies of a series of letters written between Smith and the Methodist Publishing House in Richmond in the 1930's. The church had obtained new hymnals, and then found itself to be unable to pay for them. As the somewhat hapless go-between in a dispute between the Chairman of the Board of Stewards and the irate woman clerk at the Publishing House, Smith succeeded in postponing a crisis over a period of many months, in which the church gradually was able to complete the payments.

Mr. Smith served his church as administrator, diplomat, innovator, and record-keeper - but his expressed attitude in all that he did was that of servant. At his death in 1955, he was memorialized by the printing of his picture on the cover of the church bulletin, and in plans for a church library to be maintained in his memory. During the later years of his service, Miss Elizabeth McCall was employed as church secretary, and she remained for many years, retiring in 1982. In the years of service which Mr. Smith gave to the church, numbering more than thirty, the responsibilities which he had assumed had grown to such proportions that his work was assumed after his death by Louis M. Wofford, the church's first full-time Business Administrator. At his retirement in 1977, Mr. Wofford was succeeded by Barbara Y. Hunt.

The decline of the class meetings in the 1860's had led the leaders of the church to deplore the lack of education and nurture for the adult members of the church in the late nineteenth century. But by the time the congregation had occupied its new quarters, this problem had been overcome, as Christian education for adults, in Adult Bible Classes and in the missionary education activities of the organized women's groups, was thriving.

The basis for the involvement of hundreds of adults in the past few decades of First Church has been the international, interdenominational Baraca-Philathea organization. This movement for the study of the Bible was organized in the latter years of the nineteenth century. The local Baraca class, named for A. L. Smoot, was organized in October, 1904. The men must have used a room in the parsonage for a meeting place, as Minutes of Stewards' meetings about 1908 refer to the place of meeting as "the Baraca Room of the Parsonage." Other Churches in Salisbury also had Baraca classes, and the first state convention for North Carolina was held in Salisbury in 1912. In addition to Mr. Smoot, Mr. A. L. Saleeby was noted for his energetic devotion to the class over the years, and the leadership of Mr. B. V. Hedrick assumed world-wide prominence. (The administrative office of the Baraca-Philathea organization is at the Tower House on the Potomac River. Mr. Hedrick was instrumental in the purchase of the facilities for the organization.) Notices of Baraca class meetings to be held in the Tabernacle are to be found in 1918 newspapers, and the new church boasted a Baraca Room with a seating capacity of 200. The group observed its 44th anniversary in October, 1948.

The Philathea movement (the women's arm of the Baraca-Philathea organization) was established in this church by Mrs. Hedrick in 1941. The initial roll of 5 Junior Philathea members grew to 15 within a year. Service to community and church, at the impetus of Bible study, is characteristic of the class. Many of the charter members of that class continue to be active in it, as it has evolved from the Junior Philathea Class to the Daisy Hedrick Class.⁶

The effectiveness of women's work has already been noted. But, with the exception of the statistical information which can be obtained from the Conference Journals, no written record is left to tell any details of this facet of the life of First Church until 1940, the inaugural year of the reunited church. The reorganized denomination was formed when the Northern and Southern branches cast aside their differences, and were joined by the Methodist Protestant Church to create the Methodist Church. (Again, as at the time of the dissolution of the church in 1844, there is no written record of how Salisbury Methodists were affected by the new connection.) In the new connection, the women's

organization was called the Women's Society of Christian Service. The story that emerges from reading the Minutes of two decades of this organization is one of active and well-organized involvement in the total life of the church. The women of First Methodist Church, Salisbury, educated themselves and the children and youth of the church about missionary needs around the world, and they contributed their time and resources to support local and overseas mission work. A service organization formed by the younger women of the church spent many years of intense involvement in meeting the needs of children in the community, in the days before a local welfare agency could provide for them. But this group was eventually absorbed into the official organization of women, where many of its members were equally diligent in their commitment to service.

Since the World War was raging at the time the Women's Society and its sister organization, the Wesleyan Service Guild, were organized, the local group expended much effort in support of church members who served in the armed services. During and after the war, meeting and study time were devoted to considerations of how the peace could be ultimately kept, and the role the church should play in rebuilding the world after the war. At the same time, through Secretaries for Children's Work and Youth Work, and through a close working relationship with the staff education worker, the women were closely involved in the total ministry of the church as it involved children and youth. Staff education workers who worked closely with the Women's Society in those days included Mary Elisabeth Bunch, Betty Johnson, Mary Ellen Harrell, Rubie Plant, Eunice (Pat) Floyd, Emily Hearn, Milton Widenhouse, and church members Mrs. R. R. Richardson and Marian Craig.⁷

Meetings in those years were held on Monday afternoons, with social hours following a period for circle meetings and programs. Children and youth often participated in the programs to share what they had learned in their missions studies. In the latter years of the nineteenth century, much attention was given to Paine Institute, a Negro College in Georgia which operated under the missionary auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Small sums of money were regularly sent from this church in support of the Institute.⁸ In more recent years, beneficiaries of the Women's Society have included Pfeiffer College, Bennett College, Allen High School for Negro Girls in Asheville, Bethlehem Centers in Charlotte and Winston-Salem, and the Brooks-Howell Home for retired Deaconesses in Asheville.

The years immediately after the close of the war were marked by the total church's participation in a world-wide program to provide financial and moral leadership for rebuilding parts of the world which had been devastated by the war. In 1945, a combined choir sang at a district service which took place at First Church, and the Post reported that some \$65,000.00 (\$1,000 over the quota for the district) was raised toward a national goal of twenty-five million dollars.⁹

In March, 1947, the church hosted a two-day Student Life Conference, in which young men and boys who were contemplating the ministry as a vocation were invited to meet with Dr. J. C. Rowe to learn about the profession.¹⁰

By the late 1940's, the congregation was faced with critical inadequacies of its facilities as the membership and the involvement of persons in church activities continued to increase. By 1950, the congregation had a membership of 1800, with the average attendance at Sunday School about 500 persons and at worship about 400 persons, and meetings and weekday activities averaged 25

per week. The Council house, which the church had purchased in 1934, had provided additional space for children's activities, but it was inadequate for long-term use.

In 1948, the Post reported that the congregation had raised \$300,311.50 to support the building of new facilities. Of this total, two large gifts made possible the construction of the Fellowship Hall (\$65,000.00 from Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stanback and family) and the Chapel (\$30,000 from the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. B. V. Hedrick).¹¹ After the campaign, led by Tom M. Stanback, E. A. Goodman, Jr., and Pastor C. C. Herbert, ground was broken for the construction of the new building on November 3, 1951, during a brief service following the morning worship service. Since the Council house was demolished as part of this project, temporary quarters had to be provided for the children of the Church School in the existing church building.



CHAPEL AND EDUCATIONAL BUILDING – 1953

Two years later, in August, 1953, the facilities were formally opened during a Week of Jubilee. Sunday services, both morning and evening, were followed by conducted tours of the new buildings. At ten o'clock on Sunday morning, the celebration was opened with a Grand Processional of Children and Youth to the Education Building. On successive weekdays, meetings of the WSCS, the Church School Workers, the Official Board and Quarterly Conference, the

Youth, and a Family Night Picnic were followed by "Open House with Conducted Tours of the Building and Music in the Chapel." On Sunday, September 6, the week was concluded by an afternoon Open House for the community and for other Methodists in the Western North Carolina Conference.¹² Robie Nash and Russell Emerson had served as co-chairmen of the Building Committee in this impressive undertaking, with Mrs. R. R. Richardson serving as secretary.

In 1956, plans were begun for another \$450,000 renovation, to include replacement of the 1917 sanctuary and the 60-year-old parsonage. In 1957, under the leadership of Dr. J. C. Hall and Jake Alexander, a new parsonage was built on Colony Road, and was first occupied by the family of the Rev. Harold Robinson.¹³

With the acquisition of the Cook and Nicholas property in 1956, the congregation could expand its facilities to cover the entire 200 block of South Church Street. Another building committee, led by E. A. Goodman, Jr., guided the congregation in the building of the present sanctuary, offices, and adult education rooms. The new sanctuary was to approximately replace the old parsonage in its location, with a lawn replacing the area where the 1917 structure had stood. The new building was formally opened in May, 1963, during the pastorate of Harlan L. Creech, Jr. Services had been held for a month, including the wedding of Barbara Grubb and Ben Knox White on April 6, 1953. Palm Sunday services were held on April 7, with nightly services during Holy Week. A funeral had been held already, after the tragic death of sixteen-year-old Bruce Caldwell in an automobile accident. The forty-ninth Annual Meeting of the North Carolina Baraca-Philathea Union had also taken place in the new facilities in April.



CHURCH STREET PARSONAGE



SANCTUARIES — FROM OLD TO NEW

Bishop Nolan B. Harmon was the preacher for the morning services on the day of dedication, after which the congregation proceeded outdoors for the laying of the cornerstone. Articles which are in the cornerstone, as listed in the bulletin for the morning services, include the Holy Bible; The Methodist Hymnal; an old Methodist Hymnal (presented by Mrs. Mask); the Book of Worship; the April 25th North Carolina Christian Advocate; the Journal of the 1962 Session of the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Church; The 1960 Discipline; the May-June, 1963, issue of The Upper Room; "History of the First Methodist Church, Salisbury." by Miss Virginia Jenkins, Mrs. William Stanback, Mrs. Norman Clark, and Mrs. Teenus Cheney; a list of pastors and superintendents, 1780-1963; Planning Committee Recommendations; Members of the Building Committee; Organization of the Official Board, 1962-63; Roll of Active Members; Officers and Leaders of the Church School; Rolls of Church School Classes and Teachers; Officers and Members of WSCS; Members of the Decorating Committee; a Bulletin of the Groundbreaking service and other information about the groundbreaking from the Post; brochure of the 1961 Financial Campaign; publicity from the Post; Bulletin of the Official Opening; "Articles and pictures of special interest."

A building fund campaign begun in 1961 eventually raised over \$510,000.00 to pay for the new structure and its furnishings. In addition to the building committee, a planning committee, under the leadership of Mr. John Hanford, Jr., and a decorations committee, under the leadership of Mr. Russell Emerson, served faithfully to prepare the new facilities for use by the congregation.

With the liquidation of all building debts, the new sanctuary was dedicated in December, 1966, during the pastorate of Dr. Ralph Taylor. That same year, the congregation joined others from a common heritage to form the United Methodist Church. Since then, it has been known as First United Methodist Church, Salisbury.

The altar-centered design of the new sanctuary necessitated the organization of persons to care for the appointments and furnishings of the new chancel. Under the leadership of Mrs. William Younts, an Altar Guild was formed, and the Guild continues to this day, with a rotating membership of women who are committed to the loving care of God's house.



The Austin organ which was built for the 1917 structure was retained for use in the new building, along with chimes which had been given in memory of the mother of Mr. B. V. Hedrick in 1943. In 1980, one hundred years after a similar episode in the life of the congregation, a new organ, built by the Schantz Organ Company, was installed, along with a Maas-Rowe Carillon which witnesses to the presence of the church in the community by striking the hour and by broadcasting hymns from the church tower. Professor Stanley R. Scheer of Pfeiffer College was engaged as consultant in the design of the organ, which was dedicated in a series of programs beginning in October, 1980, under the leadership of Jane Price, organist and music director of the church.

Worship during the Christmas season has been greatly enhanced by the addition to the chancel of Christmas trees, with ornaments symbolic of the life and person of Christ, made by women of the church. A three-octave set of handbells given by the heirs of Mr. and Mrs. J. Giles Hudson, Sr. also contribute to the festivity of many worship occasions.

In the new facilities, as in the old, continual efforts are made to involve children, young people, and adults in a wide variety of church activities. Under the guidance of Directors of Education Ellen F. Fisher, Elinor Heermans, Joyce Caddell, and Julia Dedmond, the faith has been communicated to members of all ages in Sunday School Classes, Confirmation classes, Bible and other study groups, prayer groups, and Youth Fellowships. Scouting has a proud tradition in the congregation, with countless young people and many adult leaders involved.

In addition to graded classes for children, Sunday School offers a variety of settings for adult learning and fellowship, with the Daisy Hedrick, Susanna Wesley, and Marv-Martha classes for women, the Golden Rule-Men's Bible Class, and the Mr. and Mrs. Class, the Adam and Eve Class, and the Christian Forum Class for adults of various ages and interests.

The church has opened its doors to the community in a variety of ways. Youth of the community have enjoyed use of the facilities at dances after school football games, and through participation in Youth Fellowship activities at T. H. E. Farm. In 1970, the Child Development Center opened, with preparation of facilities undertaken by the Christian Forum Class. Many children from the community, usually from lower-income families, have benefitted from this state-supported program of preschool education.

The church's local unit of United Methodist Women provides the women of the congregation with opportunities for education and involvement in mission in the contemporary world, just as preceding organizations did in generations past. In addition, the local unit has given a number of its members to roles of leadership in the larger organization of United Methodist Women.

And so the congregation of First United Methodist Church, Salisbury, nearly 1300 strong in 1983, faces many of the same issues and situations in the modern world which the body of Christians who have worshipped together in the Methodist tradition in Salisbury for two hundred years has faced from one generation to another. The same challenges of evangelism, growth and nurture of members, witness to the community and mission to the world which were met by Methodists in earlier generations, are met with conviction and enthusiasm by those who are the heirs of that original "society of truly affectionate Christians."



WITNESSING TO THE PRESENCE OF THE CHURCH
IN THE COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD

AFTERWORD

The concluding chapter of the history of First United Methodist Church cannot be written by one person. For, while specific events in the life of the congregation can be documented and described, the story of the church can only be completed as each person in the congregation tells of ways in which his (or her) life has helped to shape, or has been shaped by, the common life of the church members. And in this way, each person's rendering of the history of the congregation is as important as each other one's. The real history of a church must be a subjective, and not merely objective, document.

While there are many proud moments in the two hundred years of the congregation's history, much of the history is that of human enterprise which acquires vigor and nobility because it is committed to the service of Christ in the world. While there is much to be learned from looking back on two hundred years, there is little to be cherished unless the witness of those two hundred years impels those of us in the present generation to accept the tasks of the present age in the same spirit of determined commitment which characterized our forbears. As we bear witness to the Spirit which ennobled them, so much their spirits witness our willingness to follow in their footsteps, to take up their race.

A cloud of witnesses around

Hold thee in full survey;

Forget the steps already trod,

and onward urge thy way.

Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED THE CONGREGATION

(This list is taken from the Historical Record found in The Official Membership and Church Record, compiled from September 5, 1950 through December 19, 1980.)

Year	Pastor	Presiding Elder
1780	Andrew Yeargan	
1781		
1782	John Cooper	
1783	Beverly Allen	
1784	Jesse Lee	
1785	Joshua Heartly	
1786	Thomas Williams	Ruben Ellis
1787	Mark Moon	"
1788	John Baldwin	John Gunell
1789	Sihon Smith	Edward Morris
1790	Jas Parks	Thos Brown
1791	John McGhee	Isaac Lowe
1792	Aquila Sugg	"
1793	David Haggard	Jas Parks
1794	William Spencer	William Spencer
1795	David Thompson	"
1796	John N. Jones	Josiah Askew
1797	Duke W. Hullum	Henry Hill
1798	Geo McKenny	Law'e Mansfield
1799	Jas Douthet	Jas Rogers
1800	Abner Hemley	Franc Roythress
1801	Jesse Cole	Jas Douthet
1802	Wm. Ormond	"
1803	Jas Patterson	Phillip Bruce
1804	John Moore	Alex McKam
1805	Wm Allgood	Thos Mann
1806	Josiah Phillip	John Buxton
1807	John Owen	Thos L. Douglass
1808	Joshua Kilpatrick	"
1809	Fray William	Sam'l Garrard
1810	John Latimore	"
1811	Joel Burgess	"
1812	John Moore	William Jean
1813	Robt Gilbraith	"
1814	Josiah Morton, J.C. Owen	Edward Cannon
1815	Thos Mann, W. Johnson	"

1816	Bowen Reynolds	Edward Cannon
1817	Abram Trail, R.C. Carson	"
1818	Benj. Stephens, Chas. L. Cooley	Jas Patterson
1819	Jas Reid, Arch'd Robison	"
1820	Wm Eastwood	"
1821	Wm Harris	"
1822	Thacker Muir	Lewis Kidmore
1823	Joakim Lane	"
1824	Jas Dunahay	"
1825	Robt Wilkerson	"
1826	Christopher Thomas, and Benj. Edge	Peter Doub
1827	J.C. Ballow, W.N. Abington	"
1828	Geo. Stephens, W.W. Schoolfield, Geo. Gregory	"
1829	J.H. Watson, Thales McDonald, Miles Foy	"
1830	Benj. Kidd	Moses Brock
1831	S. D. Thopkins	"
1832	C. P. Moorman	"
1833	C. P. Moorman, J.S. Thompson	J. W. Childs
1834	Thales McDonald	"
1835	"	Wm. Penn
1836	R. O. Burton	"
1837	Wm. Johnson	James Reid
1838	F. S. Campbell	"
1839	J. D. Lumsden	"
1840	"	Peter Doub
1841	E. L. Perkins	"
1842	R. P. Bibb	"
1843	T. S. Campbell	"
1844	John W. Tiernin, P.W. Yearby	Joseph Goodman
1845	R. Bibb, J. Martin	"
1846	S. M. Frost	S. D. Bumpass
1847	A. S. Andrews	"
1848	Lemon Shell	"
1849	T. P. Ricard	Wm. Carter
1850	"	"
1851	J. P. Simpson	"
1852	"	"
1853	(no record)	Wm. Barringer
1854	L. S. Burkhead	"
1855	"	"
1856	R. G. Barrett	"
1857	R. S. Moran	N. F. Reid
1858	H. T. Hudson	"
1859	T. W. Guthrie	W. H. Bobbitt
1860	A. W. Mangum	"
1861	"	"
1862	W. H. Wheeler	I. T. Wyche
1863	D. R. Bruton	"
1864	A. W. Mangum	"
1865	"	"

1866	W. H. Wheeler	Wm. Closs
1867	C. Plyler	Wm. Closs
1868	J. C. Thomas	"
1869	L. S. Burkhead	J. T. Hudson
1870	J. W. Wheeler	M. L. Wood
1871	R. G. Barrett	"
1872	L. W. Crawford	"
1873	"	"
1874	"	D. R. Bruton
1875	"	"
1876	W. C. Gannon	"
1877	J. J. Renn	"
1878	"	R. G. Barrett
1879	"	"
1880	L. W. Crawford	W. S. Black
1881	Joseph Wheeler	"
1882	"	"
1883	"	"
1884	"	W. H. Bobbitt
1885	T. W. Smith	"
1886	C. W. Byrd	"
1887	"	"
1888	"	J. T. Gibbs
1889	T. W. Guthrie	J. J. Renn
1890	W. H. Leith	"
1891	"	"
1892	"	"
1893	"	J. R. Scroggs
1894	T. F. Marr	"
1895	"	"
1896	"	"
1897	"	J. R. Brooks
1898	J. H. Weaver	"
1899	H. L. Atkins	W. W. Bays
1900	"	"
1901	"	"
1902	"	"
1903	W. R. Ware	G. H. Detwiler
1904	J. C. Rowe	D. Atkins
1905	"	"
1906	E. K. McLarty, Sr.	"
1907	"	A. W. Plyler
1908	S. B. Turrentine	J. C. Rowe
1909	"	"
1910	Parker Holmes	"
1911	J. W. Moore	"
1912	"	W. R. Ware
1913	"	"
1914	"	"
1915	T. F. Marr	J. C. Rowe
1916	W. A. Lambeth	"

1917	W. A. Lambeth	J. C. Rowe
1918	J. E. Abernethy	"
1919	"	J. F. Kirk
1920	"	"
1921	J. F. Kirk	T. F. Marr
1922	"	"
1923	"	"
1924	L. D. Thompson	"
1925	"	Z Paris
1926	H. C. Sprinkle	"
1927	"	"
1928	A. D. Wilcox	H. C. Sprinkle
1929	J. H. Barnhardt	"
1930	"	"
1931	A. L. Stanford	"
1932	"	C. S. Kirkpatrick
1933	W. A. Newell	"
1934	"	"
1935	"	"
1936	"	C. N. Clark
1937	W. B. West	"
1938	"	"
1939	"	"
1940	"	"
		(District Superintendent)
1941	"	C. N. Clark
1942	Walter J. Miller	Edgar H. Nease
1943	"	R. M. Courtney
1944	"	"
1945	"	"
1946	"	"
1947	"	W. B. West
1948	C. C. Herbert, Jr.	"
1949	"	"
1950	"	J. C. Cornette
1951	"	"
1952	George B. Clemmer	"
	(In 1953 Mr. Clemmer gave up his position because of his wife's ill health. They moved to Junaluska.)	
1953(February)	Brunson C. Wallace	J. C. Cornette
1953	E. K. McLarty, Jr.	"
1954	"	Paul Townsend
1955	"	"
1956	"	"
1957	"	"
1958	Harold M. Robinson	"
1959	"	"
1960	Harold M. Robinson & Frank W. Kiker, Jr.	James C. Stokes

1961	Harlan L. Creech, Jr. & Frank W. Kiker, Jr.	James C. Stokes
1962	Harlan L. Creech, Jr. & Don L. Jenkins	"
1963	"	"
1964	"	"
1965	Ralph H. Taylor & Don L. Jenkins	Chas. E. Shannon
1966	Ralph H. Taylor & Chas. E. Page	"
1967	Ralph H. Taylor & William H. Osborne, Jr.	"
1968	"	Melton E. Harbin
1969	D. Edwin Bailey & William H. Osborne, Jr.	"
1970	D. Edwin Bailey & Ellis Rouse, Jr.	"
1971	"	"
1972	"	"
1973	Jerry D. Murray & Joseph C. Seymour, Jr.	"
1974	"	Earle R. Haire
1975	Jerry D. Murray & Keys S. Pendleton	"
1976	R. Herman Nicholson & Jan P. Heermans	"
1977	"	"
1978	R. Herman Nicholson & Rex L. Gibbs	"
1979	"	"
1980	"	Robert L. Carter, Jr.
1981	George W. Rudisill	"
1982	George W. Rudisill & Neal F. Brower	"

FOOTNOTES

Chapter 1

1. The Rowan Story, 1753-1953: A Narrative History of Rowan County, North Carolina (Salisbury, 1953), p.3.
2. Ibid., p. 9.
3. Ibid., p. 13.
4. Ibid., p. 15.
5. Ibid., p. 18.
6. Ibid., p. 39.
7. Ibid., p. 42.
8. Ibid., pp. 28-35.

Chapter 2

1. Methodism in Western North Carolina (The Western North Carolina Conference, The Methodist Church, 1966), p. 13.
2. Ibid., p. 11.
3. Ibid., pp. 16-17.
4. Stuart T. Henry, "A Lesson from Methodist History: Reflections on How Methodism Survived Transplantation to the New World and Lived to Prosper in America," Methodism Alive in North Carolina (Durham, 1976), p. 24.
5. Ibid., p. 26.
6. Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, Annually Held in America: From 1773-1813; Inclusive (New York, 1813). Minutes recorded for each year are entitled "Minutes of Some Conversations Between the Preachers in Connexion with the Reverend Mr. John Wesley."
7. Ibid., p. 27.
8. Clark, p. 44.
9. Minutes, op. cit., p. 39.
10. John Lednum, A History of the Rise of Methodism in America, Containing Sketches of Methodist Itinerant Preachers from 1736 to 1785 (Philadelphia, 1859), pp. 372-376.
11. Jethro Rumble, A History of Rowan County Containing Sketches of Prominent Families and Distinguished Men with an Appendix (Baltimore, 1974) p. 69.
12. Lednum, p. 373.
13. Clark, p. 27.
14. Minutes, op. cit., for 1785.
15. Clark, p. 54.
16. Ibid.
17. Journals and Letters, vol. 1, ed. Clark (Nashville, 1958), pp. 481-82.
18. Ibid., p. 509.
19. Lee's work is entitled A Short History of the Methodists in the United States Beginning in 1766, and Continuing Till 1809.
20. Memoir of the Rev. Jesse Lee, with Extracts from His Journals (New York, 1823), p. 64.

21. Ibid., p. 65.
22. Ibid., pp. 77-78
23. Rumble, p. 290.
24. Clark, pp. 27-28.

Chapter 3

1. Homer M. Keever, "A Lutheran Preacher's Account of the 1801-02 Revival in North Carolina", Methodist History, July, 1982, p. 38.
2. See Appendix, "Pastors Who Have Served This Church," where Cole is listed as having been appointed in the year 1801.
3. Keever, p. 41.
4. Asbury's Journal notes a return to Salisbury in the winter of 1808.
5. Keever, p. 41.
6. Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1831.
7. Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Stewards, 1907-1911, hereinafter referred to as Stewards' Minutes. Entries are dated in this volume, as they are in Church Minutes.
8. Church Minutes.
9. This interview, found in an undated clipping, was also the basis of an article in the church newsletter, the Ecclesia, in the 1970's
10. Church Minutes.
11. Stewards' Minutes.
12. Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North Carolina Conference, 1843.
13. An undated clipping from the Salisbury Post, supplied by Mrs. Hellard, identifies a picture of these pall bearers, standing in front of the church, as a reprint of a photograph supplied to the Post by Miss Hattie Crawford.
14. A **list** of the contents of the church's safety deposit box in 1977 included a note and mortgage on this property for \$1500.00, dated August 23, 1902.
15. From an interview with Mrs. Rendleman, 1981.
16. H. D. Farish, The Circuit Rider Dismounts: A Social History of Southern Methodism, 1865-1900 (New York, 1969), pp. 363-370.
17. Church Minutes.
18. Stewards' Minutes.
19. Modern historians, including Anne F. Scott, attribute much of the impetus for the contemporary women's rights movement to the establishment of organized women's work in the Methodist church in the late nineteenth century. A thorough study of the work done by women for mission in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, may be found in Noreen Dunn Tatum's Crown of Service (Nashville, 1963).
20. Tatum, p. 98.
21. Historical sketch of Park Avenue Methodist Church, typescript, contained in archives of Western North Carolina Conference, Charlotte, N.C.
22. Article from North Carolina Christian Advocate, contained in Conference Archives, noting commemoration of founding of Main Street United Methodist Church. (Note: the expansion of Methodism to the Western limits of Salisbury, a half-century later, led to the founding of the Milford Hills Church.)

7. This information is taken from a transcription of the information contained on the actual deed, contained in the archives of the Western North Carolina Conference. The names of the trustees are also recorded by Rumble.
8. James Brawley, "New Church to be Fourth to Occupy Church Street Site," Salisbury Post, Oct. 26, 1961.
9. Rumble, p. 295.
10. The Autobiography of Brantley York, ed. Charles Mathis (Jonesville, 1977), p.v.
11. Ibid., p. 24.
12. For a full discussion of Wesley and the Moravians, see Edward Langton, History of the Moravian Church (London, 1956), Chapters 13 and 14.
13. Records of the Moravians in North Carolina (Raleigh, 1964) IX, p. 4379.
14. Clark, p. 13.
15. Unpub. letter from Eugenia Stafford, Kernersville, N.C., to Dr. R. Herman Nicholson, First United Methodist Church, Salisbury, 1976.
16. Records of the Moravians, op. cit., p. 4595.
17. Ibid.
18. Stafford letter.

Chapter 4

1. Minutes of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North Carolina Conference, 1839.
2. Minutes, 1785, op. cit.
3. See, for example, Purifoy, "The Southern Methodist Church and the Proslavery Argument," Journal of Southern History XXXII (August, 1966), 325.
4. Membership Roll, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Salisbury Station, 1852-1887.
5. Ibid.
6. Robert, "Excommunication, Virginia Style," South Atlantic Quarterly XL (July, 1941), 244.
7. Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, North Carolina Conference, 1860
8. Brawley, "New Church to be Fourth to Occupy Church Street Site," op. cit.
9. The Post article has been copied, in typescript, into the Historical Record of The Official Membership and Church Record, Sept. 5, 1950-Dec. 19, 1980 (First United Methodist Church).
10. This letter, addressed "To Whom It May Concern," was included in the cornerstone of the subsequent building, along with the coin.
11. Minutes, North Carolina Conference, op. cit.
12. Marriage recorded in Membership Book, 1864.
13. This letter, in Mangum's handwriting, is included in the collection of Mangum's papers in the Manuscripts Department, Duke University.
14. "A History of the Salisbury, North Carolina, Confederate Prison," Southern Historical Association, vol. 3.
15. Mangum's letter to his successor is recorded in his handwriting in the book containing the Membership Roll, 1852-1887.
16. Membership Roll, 1852-1887.

17. Minutes, North Carolina Conference, 1865.
18. Ina W. Van Noppen, Stoneman's Last Raid (Raleigh, 1961), 50-62.
19. This Was Home (Chapel Hill, 1938).

Chapter 5

1. Record of Church Minutes, Salisbury Station, 1866-1883, hereinafter cited as Church Minutes. Meetings are not recorded at regular intervals during many of these years. Since this book is the only existing record of the life of the congregation, it is not known whether the irregularity of meetings recorded indicates that meetings were held sporadically, or that minutes were not always systematically kept. Since entries are dated, entries cited by date in the text will not be noted individually here.
2. Church School Record, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Salisbury, NC, 1880-1884.
3. Church Minutes.
4. Quarterly Conference Minutes, July 18, 1894.
5. This letter from Griffith has been transcribed into the Official Membership and Church Record, op. cit.
6. Leroy Smith, "Brief History of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Salisbury, N.C." (Salisbury, n.d.). This pamphlet includes a text "dictated to Sunday School Class, Junior No. 6" by Mr. Smith.

Chapter 6

1. Smith, "Brief History," p. 3.
2. From "Souvenir Bulletin," Sept. 14, 1924, the occasion of the dedication of the new church.
3. From Salisbury Post, August 4, 1917.
4. From Yadkin Valley Herald, August 10, 1917.
5. Minutes of Meetings of Boards of Stewards, 1918-1925. Minutes and other records for the years 1912-1917 are no longer in the church archives.
6. Information on both the Baraca and Philathea classes is taken from "Some of the History of the Baraca /Philathea and the Relation of the Junior Philathea Class of First Methodist Church to Baraca Philathea," a typescript from the archives of the Daisy Hedrick Class.
7. Minutes of the Women's Society of Christian Service, 1940-45.
8. Treasurers' Reports of various Quarterly Conference Minutes in the late 1800's show sums of money sent to Paine Institute.
9. Salisbury Post, Jan. 12, 1945.
10. Salisbury Post, March 16, 1947.
11. Salisbury Post, June 12, 1948
12. "Program for the Week of Jubilee and The Formal Opening of the Chapel, Education Building, and Fellowship Hall, August 30 - September 6, 1953."





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